



Ifimes

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The International Institute for Middle-East and Balkan Studies (IFIMES) from Ljubljana, Slovenia has been regularly analyzing the events in the Middle East and the Balkans. IFIMES has prepared a current political situation analysis of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) with a special emphasis on the role of the High Representative in BIH Lord Paddy Ashdown and the Office of High Representative (OHR) in general. The most important and interesting sections of the comprehensive analysis are given below:

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:

THE END OF PADDY ASHDOWN'S POLITICAL CAREER?

Is Bosnia and Herzegovina after Lord Paddy Ashdown has been in the function of the High Representative for almost three years, closer to the success of becoming a modernized country according to European standards or is it closer to the 'Balkan Inn', in which it is waited for Lord Paddy Ashdown to put the light out at the time of his departure and start all over again all that has already been seen once in the spaces of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the beginning of the 1990's?

All those that are less familiar with or have a limited understanding of the state of mind of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, could conclude that a remarkably great progress has been achieved in implementing numerous and different reforms. Numerous reforms had a goal of establishing a normal community in BIH and a great number of supporters for such projects can be found in these areas. But the question rises, whether the approach and the manner of performance of the present High Representative of the international community in BIH, Lord Paddy Ashdown are correct and can therefore bring progress to BIH, since it is based on the cooperation with the national/nationalist parties as his main allies in reforms and 'subject' media, which have more than ten years ago led this country to the most tragic conflict in its history? Is it possible that the nationalist/nationalistic parties, from which come almost all of the suspects at The Hague Tribunal for War Crimes, will be the carriers of new progress in BIH? In addition to that, from the lines of national parties in BIH are also coming the most important crime carriers that are being processed now with the organs of justice in BIH (the current case of Dr. Dragan Cović, the Member of The Presidium of BIH).

The international institute IFIMES believes that the national parties are not a part of the reform structure of BIH and the representatives of the international community should not offer them a hand of partnership and support. The current High Representative Lord Ashdown is from the onset of his term providing support to the destructive political forces in BIH whether by self-initiative or not. In case this is, after all, the position of EU and USA, than this is a worrying fact upon which the reasonable civilized world should be seriously apprehensive?! It is a fact that the citizens of BIH on the elections voted for the national parties, but we should not neglect the fact that only 50% of the citizens went to vote on the

recent parliamentary and local elections (2002, 2004). With this we should bear in mind the fact that most of the voting body, and especially in the Republika Srpska, on the last local elections showed greater support to the non-national parties (parties of the political left – SNSD – The Union of Independent Social-Democrats and SP – The Socialist Party) which brings into question the legitimacy of the mentioned political approach and manner of performance of the High Representative Lord Ashdown, which is being implemented in BiH.

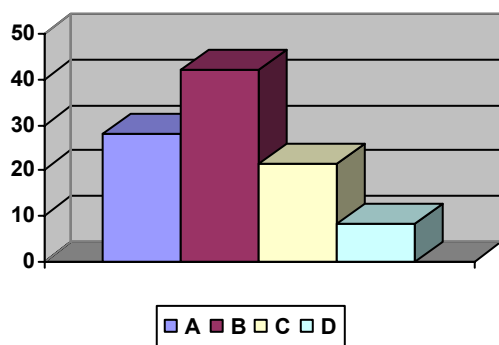
The international institute IFIMES has after the local elections on the 2nd of October 2004 performed a research in BiH in November 2004 on the sample of the citizens that did not vote at the local elections.

Data on the sample:

- Sample: random three-stage
- Sample size: 1.466 respondents (adult citizens of both genders)
- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: from the 8th till the 12th of November 2004
- Level of reliability: 95%
- Control: on 10% of the sample
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: BiH

- WHY DIDN'T YOU GO TO VOTE ON THE RECENT LOCAL ELECTIONS OF OCTOBER 2nd 2004?

- | | |
|--|--------|
| A) Due to the protective role pf the High representative in BiH | 27.90% |
| B) Due to the dissatisfaction with the rule of national parties | 42.20% |
| C) Due to the negative influence of international community on the politics of BiH (EU, USA) | 21.40% |
| D) Other reasons | 8.50 % |

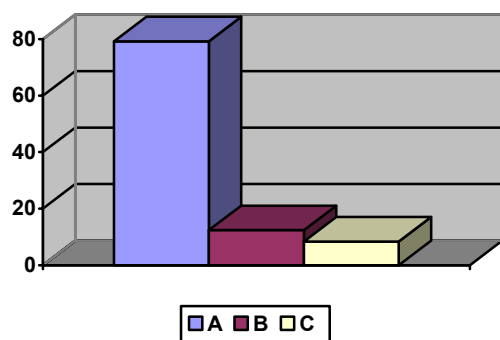


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- IN CASE YOU DID GO TO THE RECENT LOCAL ELECTIONS ON OCTOBER 2nd 2004, WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR?

- | | |
|--|--------|
| A) For the united opposition (SNDP, SP, SDP, NHI, HSS ...) | 79.20% |
| B) For the national parties | 12.40% |
| C) For other parties | 8.40% |



The international institute IFIMES believes that the main reason for dissatisfaction in BIH is the extremely difficult socio-economic situation, which is characterized by a large percentage of unemployment and little prospect of the employment rate being increased in the near future. The national parties and the High Representative Lord Ashdown are because of the lack of readiness and their own incapability running away from solving essential and vital questions of people such as: employment, social standard, more just social redistribution, fighting the organized crime and corruption. These are being directed only to the question of insufficiently consistent constitutional solutions in BIH in comparison to the European standards. By this is the High Representative leaving to the nationalists and their partners one very interesting subject, in which all three national parties are making real the theses of their own sense of being threatened in case of constitutional and political reforms and are by this creating a sense of fear among the citizens and thus helping their own political durability. This is representing a great barrier to a true change in the political conscience of the citizens, which remains at the level of the dominant conscience form the beginning of the 1990's in BIH.

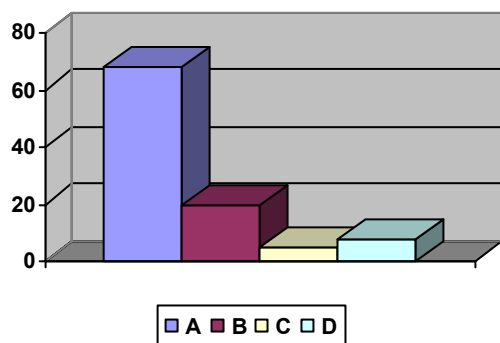
The international institute IFIMES believes that on the basis of the conducted research the only hope for BIH is to neutralize all forms of political organizing on the national basis. By this Europe and the international community in general would have to answer whether they wish for the future of BIH as an integrated community after the model of European and global value or expressively nationally divided BIH, whose nearness to the EU is representing a constant threat and a source of instability, which is surely burdening Europe but also holding a position of a country ripe for different appearing forms of crime, which is most directly hitting EU and is including a transit of international crime through BIH.

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- IN WHICH POLITICAL OPTIONS DO YOU SEE THE PERSPECTIVE FOR BIH?

A) Joint activity and action of the oppositional parties	68.10%
B) National parties	19.40%
C) New political forces	5.10%
D) I don't know	7.40%



The international institute IFIMES believes that the largest part of responsibility for the overall situation in BIH in the past two years is carrying the High Representative Lord Ashdown, who has exceptionally complicated the political scene in BIH by accepting the national parties in BIH as their own partners, with which the strongest blow was given to the development of democratic alternative in BIH in which the international community at the time was interested.

The international institute IFIMES believes on the basis of the published two-year regular analyses and research of the situation in BIH that the international community needs to make a political turn in BIH and in general start to cooperate with the progressive political parties in BIH such as: SDP – The Social-Democratic Party, SNSD, The Socialist Party, political parties of the Croats in BIH from political left and center such as HSS – Croatian Farmers' Party, NHI – New Croatian Initiative, 'Through work for better life' and new political parties, which will appear at the BIH political scene.

The international institute IFIMES believes that we should not neglect the fact that the High Representative has not explained yet where and how much money of the tax payers is being spent, most of all from EU and USA, and is by such directly influencing the hampering of efforts the international community has spent trying to help BIH through different projects insisting on transparency and purposeful spending.

The international institute IFIMES believes that the High Representative Lord Ashdown has with his activity supported the development of autocratic conscience, which has on the territory of BIH always carried a mark of a totalitarian regime, a fact that disqualifies Lord Ashdown as a democrat and with this cancels the possibility of performing after the termination of the mandate in BIH any responsible function in Great Britain or European institutions and international community in general.

The international institute IFIMES believes that the mandate of the High Representative Lord Ashdown needs to be terminated before the end of the mandate and bring to this position a moderate politician (not a professional soldier or a policeman) possibly from countries that are more gravitating towards BIH, while not excluding also the possibility politicians from the countries that were formed with the disintegration of Yugoslavia. In the current German-French competition over the choice of the new High Representative in BIH, a compromise solution could be the choice of new High Representative in BIH from Slovenia or Macedonia, since these countries are not neighbors of BIH, an idea about which there are already some discussions in certain circles in Brussels.

Ljubljana, on the 25th of March 2005



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